

## **REMARKS**

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

### **I. Claim Amendments**

Independent claims 1, 22, 24 and 26 have been amended to clarify features of the invention recited therein and to further distinguish the present invention from the references relied upon in the rejections discussed below. Support for these amendments can be found, for example, on page 8, lines 9-24 and page 11, line 28 to page 13, line 24 of the specification.

### **II. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections**

Claims 1-3, 7-9, 22, 24, 26-28 and 32-36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Oda, Osakabe and Kogane. Further, claims 4-6 and 29-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Oda, Osakabe, Kogane and Davies. These rejections are believed clearly inapplicable to amended independent claims 1, 22, 24 and 26 and the claims that depend therefrom for the following reasons.

Amended independent claim 1 recites a switching device including a reading unit that reads information from an output destination device, which generates a physical address of the switching device, such that the read information (i) indicates the physical address of the switching device, the physical address of the switching device including information indicating a physical address of the output destination device, and (ii) indicates a status of the output destination device. Further, claim 1 recites that the switching device includes an address unit

that generates a respective physical address of each input source device, such that each respective physical address of each input source device includes information indicating the physical address of the switching device. Finally, claim 1 recites that the switching device includes an outputting unit that outputs, to each respective input source device, the physical address of the input source device including the information indicating the physical address of the signal switching device generated by the address unit.

Initially, please note that the above-described 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection relies on Oda for teaching the structural relationship between the claimed switching device, the output destination device and the input source devices, and relies on Kogane for teaching the features recited in claim 1 that are admittedly lacking from Oda (i.e., the information read by the reading unit and the information generated by the address unit, as recited in claim 1) (see, for example, pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action). However, in view of the above-identified amendments to claim 1, which specifically add new limitations to the structure of the “information read by the reading unit” and the “information generated by the address unit,” it is clear that Kogane fails to disclose or suggest the above-identified distinguishing features now required by claim 1.

Rather, Kogane merely teaches that: (i) a server 5 turns on; (ii) the server 5 sends out a request to a camera 1, a storing terminal 4 and a display terminal 4; (iii) the camera 1, the storing terminal 4 and the display terminal 4 respond to the request from the server 5 and each transmit a domain name back to the server 5; and (iv) the server assigns/generates a physical address to/for each of the camera 1, the storing terminal 4 and the display terminal 4 and associates (and stores) the assigned physical addresses with the received domain names (see paragraph [0047], as cited on page 3 of the Office Action).

Thus, in view of the above, it is clear that Kogane teaches the server receives a domain name from a device and assigns/generates a physical address to/for that device so that the domain name and the physical address assigned by the server can be stored in the server, but fails to disclose or suggest reading information (from an output destination device) that (i) indicates the physical address of the switching device, the physical address of the switching device being generated by the output destination device and including information indicating a physical address of the output destination device, and (ii) indicates a status of the output destination device, and fails to disclose or suggest outputting, to each respective input source device, the physical address of the input source device (generated by the address unit) including the information indicating the physical address of the switching device (generated by the address unit), as recited in claim 1.

In other words, even though Kogane teaches that the server generates a physical address of a device and stores the physical address along with a domain name of the device, Kogane still fails to disclose or suggest that (i) the information read/stored by the switching device includes the physical address of the switching device and the physical address of the output destination device, and (ii) each physical address of the respective input source devices generated by the switching device and the physical address of the switching device are output to the respective input source devices, as required by claim 1.

Furthermore, the Applicants note that the combination of the teachings of Oda and Kogane still only result in a server that communicates to a TV and an input device, such that the server assigns/generates a physical address to/for the input device and associates the physical address of the input device with a domain name of the input device. This result of the combination of Oda and Kogane still does not disclose or suggest that (i) the information

read/stored by the switching device includes the physical address of the switching device and the physical address of the output destination device, and (ii) each physical address of the respective input source devices generated by the switching device and the physical address of the switching device are output to the respective input source devices, as required by claim 1.

Therefore, because of the above-mentioned distinctions it is believed clear that claim 1 and claims 2-9 and 36 that depend therefrom would not have been obvious or result from any combination of Oda, Kogane, and Osakabe.

In addition, the Applicants note that a result of the structure required by claim 1 is that the physical address of the output destination device, the physical address of the switching device and the physical addresses of the input source devices have a direction relationship (e.g., a hierarchy), such that the output destination device can control input source devices located further upstream via the switching device located upstream, and the input source devices can control the output destination device located further downstream via the switching device located downstream.

In light of the discussion above, the combination of Oda and Kogane does not provide the above-mentioned result of the structure required by claim 1, because the combination of Oda and Kogane merely teaches that a server generates a physical address of a device and stores the generated physical address in association with the domain name of the address, but fails to disclose or suggest that (i) the information read/stored by the switching device includes the physical address of the switching device and the physical address of the output destination device, and (ii) each physical address of the respective input source devices generated by the switching device and the physical address of the switching device are output to the respective input source devices, as required by claim 1.

Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Oda, Kogane and/or Osakabe or elsewhere in the prior art of record which would have caused a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify Oda, Kogane and/or Osakabe to obtain the invention of independent claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 and claims 2-9 and 36 that depend therefrom are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

Amended independent claims 22, 24 and 26 are directed to a method, a program and a device, respectively and each recite features that correspond to the above-mentioned distinguishing features of independent claim 1. Thus, for the same reasons discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 22, 24 and 26 are allowable over any combination of Oda, Kogane and Osakabe.

Regarding dependent claims 4-6, which were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oda, Kogane and Osakabe in view of Davies, it is respectfully submitted that Davies does not disclose or suggest the above-discussed features of independent claim 1 which are lacking from Oda, Kogane and Osakabe, as discussed above. Therefore, no obvious combination of Oda, Kogane, Osakabe and Davies would result in, or otherwise render obvious, the invention recited independent claim 1 and claims 2-9 and 36 that depend therefrom.

### III. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance and an early notification thereof is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Masazumi YAMADA et al.

/Andrew L. Dunlap/

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Andrew L. Dunlap  
Registration No. 60,554  
Attorney for Applicants

ALD/led  
Washington, D.C. 20005-1503  
Telephone (202) 721-8200  
Facsimile (202) 721-8250  
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